

**REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

By this Amendment, Claims 1, 12, and 23 are amended. Claims 28 and 31 remain withdrawn from consideration as being directed to the non-elected species. Claims 1-27, 29, 30 and 32-34 remain readable on the elected species.

**Specification**

The Official Action objected to the specification for containing minor informalities. The specification is amended at paragraphs [0002] and [0074] to address these objections. Applicants respectfully request that this objection should be withdrawn.

The claims at issue in this application are directed to a guide wire and a method of forming a guide wire. Independent Claims 1 and 12 recite a guide wire comprising, in combination with the other claimed elements, first and second wires joined by welding, with the second wire having a cross sectional area smaller than the cross sectional area of the proximal end portion of the first wire.

Claim 23 recites a method of making a guide wire comprising positioning respective first ends of first and second wires adjacent each other, wherein the first end portion of the first wire is made from a material having an elastic modulus that is different from the elastic modulus of the first end portion of the second wire. Claim 23 further recites that the method comprises welding the first end portion of the first wire and the first end portion of the second wire to one another to produce a guide wire having a welded portion, wherein the cross-sectional area of the first end portion

of the second wire is less than the cross-sectional area of the first end portion of the first wire, either before or after the welding.

**Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102(e)**

Claims 1-27, 29, 30, and 32-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated Skujins et al. ("Skujins", U.S. Patent No. 6,918,882). The Official Action takes the position that Skujins discloses a guide wire comprising a first wire 16 and second wire 14, where the second wire 14 is made from a material having an elastic modulus larger than that of the first wire 16. The first and second wires are joined by welding, and the second wire 14 has, in a vicinity of the welded area between the first and second wires, a portion 24 possessing a cross-sectional area smaller than the cross-sectional area of the proximal end portion (just to the right of 18 in Figure 1) of the first wire 16.

One way in which the guide wire and method at issue here differ from the disclosure in Skujins is that the guide wire and method here involved ends of the first and second wires being welded to each other without axial overlap. This relationship is now set forth in the independent claims.

As shown in Figures 1 and 2 of Skujins, the proximal guide wire section 14 and the distal guide wire section 16 meet at a tapered overlapping joint 12. These sections 14, 16 include end portions 24, 26 near the joint 12 that are of a reduced cross-sectional area. As described and illustrated in Skujins, these end portions 24, 26 axially overlap one another to form the tapered overlapping joint 12. Thus, Skujins does not disclose a guide wire and method in which first and second wires are joined to each other by welding without axial overlap, and wherein the second

wire has, in the vicinity of the welded portion between the two wires, a cross-sectional area smaller than the cross-sectional area of the proximal end portion of the first wire.


Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 12 and 23 are now in condition for allowance. For at least this reason, it is submitted that all claims depending from Claims 1, 12, and 23 are also allowable. Further, it is submitted that withdrawn Claims 28 and 31 properly depend from allowed claims and are thus also allowable.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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